

BEFORE THE DRAGON THRONE

CHINA SHOWS RESPECT FOR THE UNITED STATES.

Significant Features of the Presentation of Minister Calhoun to the Prince Regent—The Education of the Baby Emperor Begun at the Age of 4.

PEKIN, April 26.—It is significant that less than a week after the new American Minister, William James Calhoun, arrived in Peking he was borne in a yellow looped, green sedan chair of the pattern peculiar to China through the great central gate, the Ta Ching Men, to be received by the Prince Regent. It was this gate that was

imperial guard of five Chinese troopers leading the way with swords drawn. The delegation had hardly passed through the first gate when another, much more imposing, turned into the avenue. This, a special Belgian embassy, was escorted to the gate by a helmeted guard of Belgian cavalry, whose trim appearance contrasted curiously with the black, unkempt uniforms, the queue and the slouchy bearing of the Chinese horsemen. The contrast in the costumes of the two delegations was likewise striking, though in a different way.

Both were people of the West in the broad sense and bore themselves with similar dignity, but while the Belgians were much uniformed and wore many glittering decorations with the accompanying brilliancy of ribbons, there was



THE PRINCE REGENT, THE BABY EMPEROR OF CHINA IN HIS ARMS AND AT HIS SIDE THE EMPEROR'S YOUNGER BROTHER.

decay of ages extends into the Forbidden City.

The gates through which the processions passed are not often opened because it is the rule that only royalty or the bearers of imperial messages, among which ranks that of the American President, are to enter by these portals.

leading through the gates the outer buildings, that is to say the stables and servants' quarters, were much like those of the city which we could visit, squalid and fallen into ill repair. In one place a step which the deputation had to cross was still missing, as I understand, it had been two years before. From between the stones of the pavements that cover the vast courtyards the summer growth of weeds was beginning to sprout, and the stalks of last year's grasses upon the roofs of the low buildings waved in the gentle breeze that lifted fresh dust from the streets to fertilize the coming season's crop.

Paths worn smooth were to be seen in the stones, running diagonally from door to gate across each courtyard, the perpetual routes taken by the attendants and keepers. Unkempt persons these latter, less from indolence or laziness, as is the case with other Eastern peoples, than from poverty and hard water, which refuses to cleanse. They came out of their buildings, some followed by dogs, to look at the sedan chairs of the foreigners.

Behind the gates are ancient spears of peculiar and terrible designs, swords such as are seen on the comic opera stage, and bows and arrows of antiquity. It was all much as you would expect to find a deserted city; and because of the vastness of the courts many of them appeared deserted, so insignificant did the few keepers seem who opened the creaking doors.

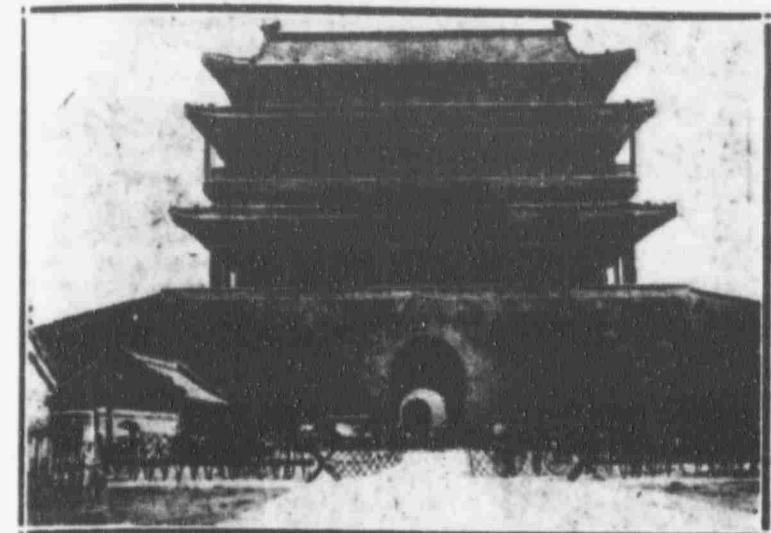
But there were splendors to be seen as well, things well made and well preserved. The three tiers of white marble, with the white marble balustrades surrounding the Temple of the Purple Light, the Examination Hall and other places which the Emperors grace with their presence are splendid works of art, though not of great size. Indeed, no buildings save the walls are on a great scale in Peking. There were two enormous urns, half globes of gold, perhaps six feet in diameter, which attracted the admiration of the visitors, great bowls for growing lotus; and at the entrance to the reception palace were two lions of gold, the emblem of the yamen or official building—strange lions, not as we would shape them—but with broad, peculiar heads.

Through the Ta Ching Men, the Tien An Men and the Tzu Men, great gates surmounted with pagodas, the Minister and his suite were borne at a short jog trot, the bearers of each chair keeping time, the spring of the long poles taking off the little rise and fall of their four lean shoulders. In the courtyard before the Wu Men the chairs are placed on the ground and the occupants emerge. There is here awaiting the bearer of the Presi-

as long as it is broad, at the far end of which is a dais of three steps supporting the dragon throne. Before the throne, which is empty, is a table with dragon legs and behind is much ornamentation in which the dragon plays an important part. In the beams of the ceiling the same ornamentation is in evidence and covering the floor is a European carpet of gaudy red in which the emblem is lacking.

child is 8 years old, by our only yet the Minister learns he has begun already to study Chinese characters from paper slips.

By two chairs the Minister makes his journey out of the Imperial gates by the eastern side. The secretaries and the military attaché follow afoot as far as the Ching Yun Gate, where they too enter chairs for the procession back to the compound of the Legation.



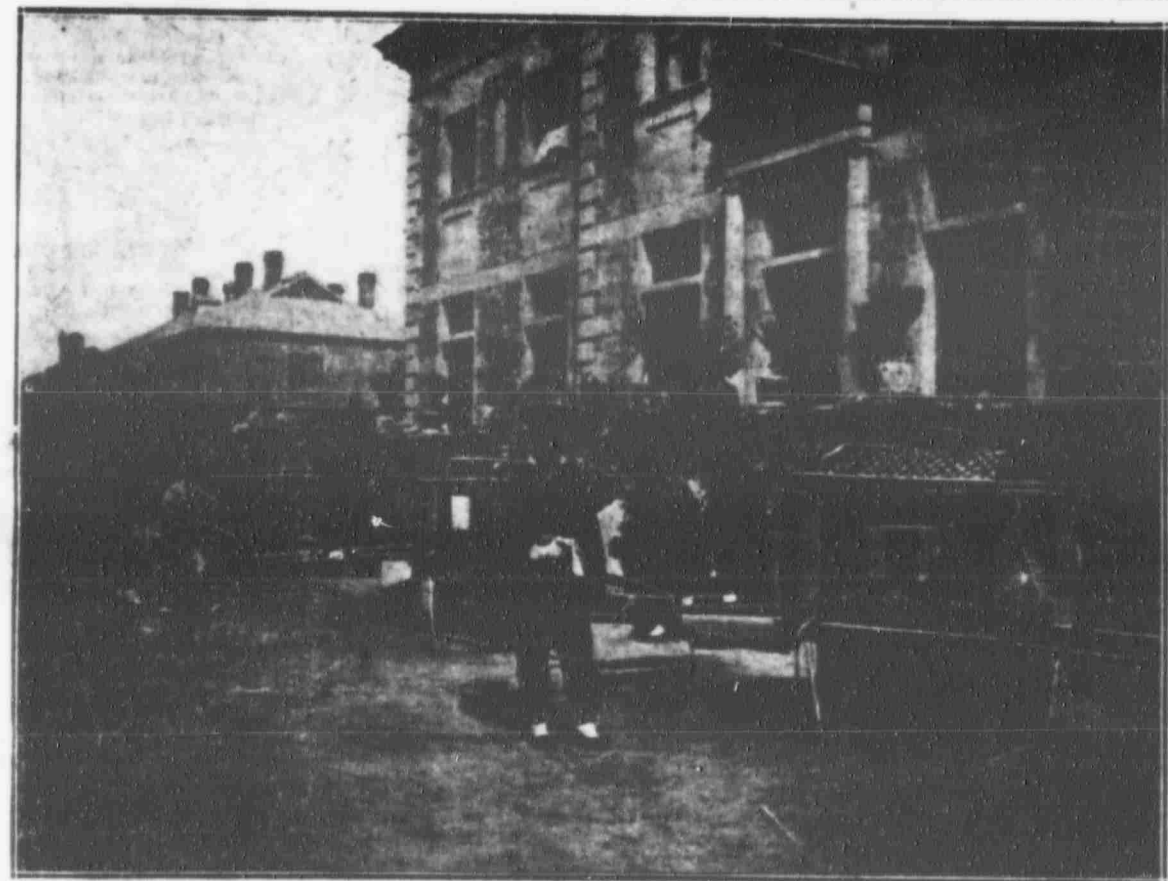
THE TA CHING MEN, THE LAST PUBLIC GATE BEFORE THE FORBIDDEN CITY.

stoutly defended against the allies at the time of the Boxer rising.

What is known as the Forbidden City, the city in which the Emperor, Son of Heaven, dwells with his family, his harem, his eunuchs and many servants, is in the center of the rectangular city of Peking, whose length lies directly north and south, so that the middle street, which is the important street of many gates leading to the sacred precincts, marks the meridian of the sun. The Forbidden City is protected from the Imperial City by double walls and a broad moat, and in turn the latter is protected from the surrounding cities, the Chinese City, the

only one man of the Americans, Col. Barnett, who was not in black and white, and only the Chinese secretary, Charles D. Tenney, wore a decoration—a decoration which, by the way, was bestowed upon him in recognition of services to the Chinese in educational matters before he entered the diplomatic service.

The Imperial Guard drew aside at the first gate and the long line of chairs passed into the first court. Those Americans in the party who were not to enter, and among whom were several ladies of the legation, mounted the high walls at the back of the legation quarter, which the German and American soldiers are as-



SEDAN CHAIRS WAITING BEFORE THE AMERICAN LEGATION.

Tatar City and the European City or Legation Quarter, which, like the others, is walled apart. So the Forbidden City is a place of walls within walls within walls.

It was necessary for Mr. Calhoun, whose reception was fixed for 9:30 A. M., to leave the Legation compound half an hour earlier, for though the Legation is almost in the shadow of the Ta Ching Men this was but the first of many gates through which he had to pass on his formal ride of honor. Dressed in evening clothes, which is the fullest dress American diplomats can wear, he and his staff of three secretaries and a military attaché, as well as Mr. Fletcher, the retiring Chargé d'Affaires, who becomes Minister to Chile, took their seats in their chairs and were borne out of the Legation gates as the American soldiers presented arms, [the

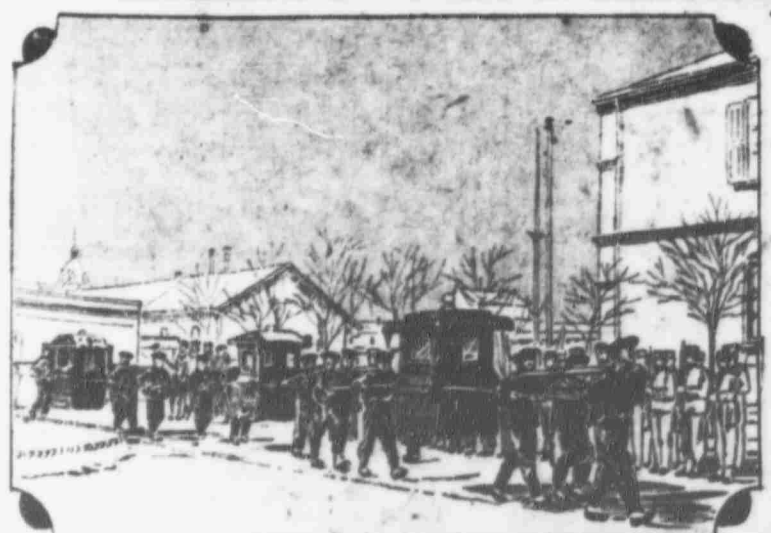
signed to keep, and watched the passage of the party through the first long court.

The glittering roofs of the succession of so-called gates shimmered like burnished gold, for they are of golden colored tiles; the first pale green of spring was upon the trees which hide the low one story shops and dwellings outside the Forbidden walls, and the distant hills behind the city faintly blended into the pearl blue sky. It was not the finest sight that any of us has witnessed, but one quite worth remembering.

If we could have escaped the odors of the city the picture might have been more fairlike, but the odors here are very real and by no means faint; and some of us were new arrivals in Peking, whose sensibilities had not grown callous. The dirt of Peking is not, I venture to say, of the outer cities only. At any rate the

and they show signs of disuse, which the imperial household does not take the trouble to obliterate.

On either side of the stone paved road



MR. CALHOUN LEAVING THE AMERICAN COMPOUND ON HIS WAY TO THE FORBIDDEN CITY.

THE SAGACIOUS SPIDER.

Formed by Nature for State of War—How It Fights and Obtains Its Food.

From the Scotsman.

Of all the solitary insects I have ever seen the spider is the most sagacious, and considered them some almost to excel. The spider is formed by nature for a state of war not only upon other insects but upon its fellows. For this state nature seems to have formed it with singular perfection.

Its head and breast are covered with a strong natural coat of mail, which is impenetrable to the attempts of every other insect, and its lower parts are enveloped in a soft, pliant skin, which eludes the sting even of a wasp. Its legs are terminated by strong claws not unlike those of

a lobster, and their vast length, like spears, serves to keep every assailant at a safe distance. Not were furnished for observation than for attack or defense; it has several eyes, large and transparent, covered with a horny substance, which, however, does not impede its vision.

Once perceived a large spider in one corner of my room making its web, in three days the web was with incredible diligence completed. It frequently traversed the web round and round, examined the strength of every part of it. The first enemy, however, it had to encounter was another and a much larger spider, which, having no web of its own and having probably exhausted all its stock of threads in former labors of this kind, attempted to invade the property of its more favored neighbor.

From then a terrible encounter ensued, in

which the aggressor seemed to have the game in his hands and my laborious spider was obliged to take refuge in his cave. Upon this I observed the victor using every art to draw the enemy from his stronghold. He seemed to run away from the conflict, but he quickly returned, and when he found all-art vain began to demolish the new web in most merciless fashion. This brought on another fierce campaign, and contrary to my expectations my spider, became conqueror and fairly walked through his antagonist. Now in peaceable possession of what was justly his own he worked three days with the utmost patience repairing the breaches of his web and taking no sustenance so far as I could observe.

At last, however, a large blowfly fell into the snare and struggled hard to obtain his freedom. The spider gave it leave to

entangle itself as much as possible, but it seemed to be too strong for the opposition. I must own I was greatly surprised when I saw the spider sail out and in less than a minute weave a new net round its wings by which they were made motionless, and when it was fairly hampered in this manner it was seized and dragged into the hole.

In this manner the spider lived in a precarious state, but nature seemed to have fitted it for such a life, for upon a single fly it subsisted for more than a week.

I once put a wasp into the net, but when the spider came out in order to seize it as usual, upon perceiving what kind of an enemy it had to deal with it instantly broke all the bands that held it fast and contributed all that lay in its power to disengage its formidable antagonist. When the wasp was at liberty I expected that the spider would set about repairing the

breaches that were made in its net, but they were irreparable, whereupon the cobweb was entirely forsaken and a new one begun, which was completed in the usual time, three days.

Youthful Hungarian Robbers.

From the London Daily Mail.

A well organized band of boy robbers, led by a ferocious chieftain aged 15, have just been captured by the police of Sopron, Hungary. The band consisted of eleven lads, aged from 8 to 15 years, who had left their parents for a life of adventure. They lived in a large cave, and during the last three months have committed 12 robberies and one murder.

In the cave booty to the value of £5,000 was found. The young chieftain, who shot and seriously wounded the policeman who was sent to arrest him, has been sentenced to ten years confinement in a reformatory.

WALKING ALONG THE RAILROAD

When to Keep Beside the Track Than to Walk On It.

From the Boston Traveller.

Two men, one young and the other grizzled with middle age, were walking beside the railroad track in a Boston suburb on their way to the nearest station. The younger stepped between the rails. "Better walk here," he advised. "It's better walking."

"No," replied the older man. "I never walk on the railroad track." "But we're facing the direction from which trains come," persisted the other. "It's safe," "My son," said the middle aged man, "I was a railroad engineer for more than twenty years, and I learned one thing from the poor chaps I've seen picked up: it was not to walk on a railroad track when there is a possibility of walking anywhere

else. If the law stopped all trains running on Sunday and this was Sunday I wouldn't do it. It's the fellow that's sure to be taking all the precautions that gets killed."

Here was a man who knew about railroads from intimate connection with them. His advice was the advice of a man who knew. Every railroad man of experience will say the same as he. In England the tracks are private property and nobody is allowed to walk upon them, so accidents are rare. Here hardly a day passes that we do not read of men killed while making a thoroughfare of the railroad right of way. And usually it is noted that they were on the "safe" side of the track, became confused by the approach of two trains and stepped in front of one or the other.

Occasionally something is to be gained in distance by taking to the railroad instead of the public highway. (The man who feels that he must do this will be wise always to walk beside the track and never on it. It may not be quite as good walking but he is not so likely to suffer regrets in a hospital.)



CHINESE CAVALRYMEN INSIDE THE AMERICAN COMPOUND.

open and the Minister, followed by his suite, is conducted by officials of the Waiwu Pu, the Foreign Office, into the throne room, a room about three times

as large as the Minister's, followed by his formal address. This is interpreted to the Prince by the American Chinese secretary, whereupon the Prince replies in Chinese. As soon as the reply is interpreted into English by one of the Chinese officials Mr. Calhoun mounts the dais and delivers the letters of which he is the bearer from Mr. Taft. These are received by the Prince and placed before the throne on the table.

The Minister then bows to the Prince, who returns the bow, and with his suite backs to the east door, the door of honor but not that of rank, for he is no longer the bearer of the message. Princes and members of the Waiwu Pu escort the American representatives back to the library, where fruits and cakes and champagne are served in Western fashion.

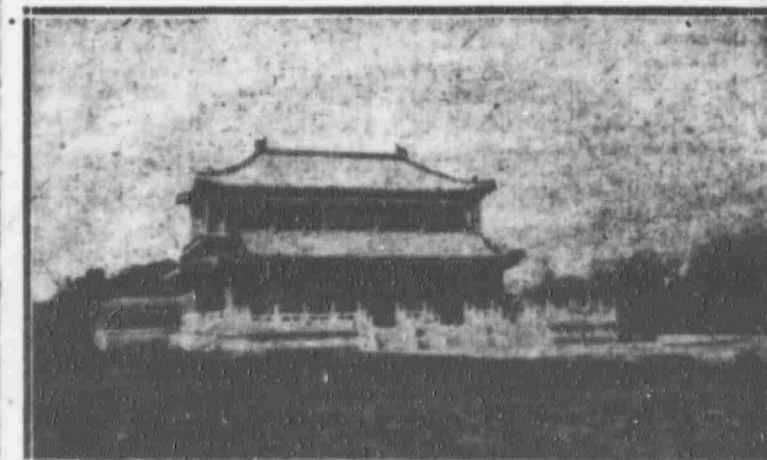
Here an informal conversation takes place and the Minister asks after the Emperor and whether he has yet begun his studies. By the Chinese count the

measures were adopted with European Ambassadors, in the days when the highest mandarins as well as the coolies in the street looked upon the rest of the world as outer barbarians.

The first British Ambassador to Peking was conveyed up the Pei Ho toward the Imperial City in a ship which flaunted a yellow flag with the words in black, "Tribute bearer from the country of England." Another was sent away with insulting treatment and conducted through the country under guard, because he refused to kowtow, that is to place his face upon the floor, before the Emperor. It was formerly the custom to hold audiences at sunrise, and foreign Ministers were required to be in waiting at the palace many hours before in order to be ready should the Emperor appear unusually early.

But China is humbled to-day and is slowly learning.

FREDERICK MOORE.



ONE OF THE RECEPTION HALLS.

No. 1—Minister Calhoun; No. 2—Mr. Fletcher; No. 3—Mr. Tenney; No. 4—Col. Barnett, Commander of the American Guard at Peking.